

Reserve

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Extension Service
Washington 25, D. C.

SUMMARY OF REPLIES TO THE QUESTION:

"THE MOST EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES FOR OUTLOOK WORK THAT WE HAVE USED IN OUR STATE"

Submitted for Use at the 26th Annual Outlook Conference

October 11-15, 1948

Organization and Personnel

"Extension - college - experiment station staff meetings."

Reserve

"An Extension Outlook committee."

"We got the best results from giving the material to the subject-matter specialists and letting them use it in program planning and in other ways."

"Building outlook discussions into programs of commodity specialists and county workers. This requires rather close work with other extension workers and the preparation of materials for their use rather than for direct distribution to farm people."

"Getting the supervisory staff, both men and women, sold on the value of outlook work."

"Efforts to include outlook information in work done (1) by all specialists in their projects and (2) by all supervisors in program planning with agents and farm families. This has been done by conferences."

"Major responsibility for outlook extension work with farmers is placed upon the county extension agents. The county agents are expected to disseminate and interpret the outlook information by all practical means, according to the types of farming and other conditions in the various local areas."

"Discussing principles and not a lot of current statistics."

"Integration with regular work."

"Lists of questions to help people think out their decisions regarding family finance."

Training of Extension Workers

"District agents are given training to help agents on outlook material."

"We have invited one of our men in our University Economics Department to give us a general picture of outlook locally, nationally and internationally. This will be followed by a panel discussion. Members of the panel will be local business men who will present the outlook from their particular field as they see it, taking into consideration the effect on the individual family unit. We plan to suggest to the agents that they might use a similar technique, inviting individuals in their local community to appear on their local outlook panel. The Home Economics Specialist who attends the outlook meeting is responsible for having a personal interview with each of the other home economics specialists to review departmental subject matter. A few times we have held special sessions for the resident and research staffs in home economics."

"Outlook information is presented to agents and local project leaders at all training meetings."

"Representatives who attend Outlook Conference present the outlook information at District and Annual meetings to State and county extension workers. In order that county workers have the latest data on outlook, each subject-matter specialist makes a contribution to the State monthly news letter sent out to all county workers, who use the information throughout the year. This information reaches the farm people from the county workers through leadership schools, home demonstration club meetings, community meetings (both men and women), radio and press."

"The most effective technique that I have found in presenting Outlook information was a joint farm and home agent training school and then in turn the agents conduct joint meetings of farm men and women. I feel that illustrative material is necessary at the joint meetings. The second most effective technique in presenting Outlook material is in the form of a skit and then a discussion led by farm and home agents."

"Summary discussions with our agriculture and home agents in district meetings, simply reviewing the information we received in Washington. Issued a publication in cooperation with our Rural Economics Department for distribution to the agents and to others where the agents thought the material might be used."

Program Planning

Incorporation of outlook material in State and county commodity programs of work - not only inclusion of actual statements but also influencing the programs in the light of the economic outlook."

"Combination of outlook and program planning meetings."

"Use of outlook in program planning committees."

Types of Meetings and Contacts

"The presentation of the over-all phase and family living factors has been varied with the panel type discussion and "agree-disagree" statements or discussion giving more appeal to agents."

"On the county level the participation of farm people is employed along with county extension workers."

"So far we have made no objective attempts to evaluate the relative efficiency of various techniques used for outlook work. My observation has been, however, that group discussion meetings are most effective, particularly for commodity outlook work."

"Conferences with boards of directors and management of farm organizations."

"Skits in meetings."

"Discussion meetings in communities."

"Various ways of presenting outlook information have been tried in the State. It seems that the most effective means is to have participation of farm people with Extension workers in a panel discussion. Some of them give results of the use of new materials or methods which are being advocated. In 1948, the

animated charts were used and found to be very effective. For several years, demonstrations along the line of Outlook information have been used, and many favorable comments have been made in regard to them. This year outlook information was sent out periodically for use in the counties. It has not been determined how frequently this was used, but it could make the Outlook much more effective than giving it only once a year. Some counties had a discussion after the information was presented as to how it could be used in the county. In some cases, this led to effective use of the information."

"At District Conferences our Home Economist presented an illustrated lecture on all outlook items pertaining to the family. Agents were interested in the simplicity of presentation. For two years our Agricultural Economist has prepared information on World Trade and the Food Situation. This has been given at home demonstration agent-district leader schools. A great deal of group discussions were held."

"Short presentations giving some of the most significant information in connection with meetings called for some other purpose. For example, three short talks were given during some of our district housing training meetings. Integration with regular work. Short leaflets giving high points in connection with some specific industry or problem. Extension leaflets on milk or dairy situation and beef-cattle situation."

Types of Releases, Literature and Teaching Techniques

"For several years we issued a small leaflet $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ which we called "Outlook in a Nutshell" giving one half to a dozen short statements regarding agriculture and family living."

"Preparation and use of more understandable charts. (These were made available to county agents.)"

"Small group discussions - We rework the material into leading questions that will promote group discussions."

"Use of a skit - we prepared the material into a short skit with local characters to take the parts."

"Novel ideas - last year we made ten recommendations based on outlook and mounted them separately on flannel. As we talked we placed each on a board in view of the audience; this board was also covered with flannel. People expected them to slide off, but the two pieces of cloth adhered together. Just a trick to make them remember."

"We prepared articles for newspapers, radio and Extension News Letter but question their value. We believe in having local people do more of the talking, then it becomes their ideas."

"Preparation of mimeographed materials which give information in a relatively simple form for easy reference by agents as they work with the rural people in the county."

"News releases, radio. Home Living material included in Outlook put out by economics department."

"One-page enterprise sheets summarizing favorable and unfavorable factors - sheets prepared on milk production, cotton production, beef-cattle production."

"News articles in local papers. District meetings in which discussions, charts, skits, etc., have been held in this State but have not proved too effective a technique besides being very expensive."

"Outlook leaflets were distributed to members of our home extension clubs through our home demonstration leaders."

"Last year we duplicated the playlet on "Mr. and Mrs. Farmer Look at 1948", which the agent used locally."

"Circular letters prepared by specialist."

A Few Examples of Complete Statements by States

Example 1. Widespread use of current outlook:

- a. Farm Science - 22,000 monthly
- b. News and radio releases from Farm Science material
- c. Outlook letter weekly
- d. News and radio releases from same
- e. Annual outlook leaflet
- f. Monthly outlook column in Wallace's Farmer Circulation
200,000 copies

Careful training for staff and leaders, for staff two or three times annually; for leaders, annually. We expect to reach 1500 to 2000 professional people and farm men and women leaders from all of the State.

- Example 2.
- a. Training of extension agents on economic topics, at annual conferences, at bi-monthly district conferences, and by supplying charts and other special material from time to time.
 - b. Arranging for as many as possible of the cooperatives of state to have outlook material presented at their annual meetings. All extension economists cooperate. Letter to cooperatives prior to season of annual meetings announces topics and speakers, then invitations come in for specific persons.
 - c. Early preparation of economic literature. Usually put out 4 to 6 separate pamphlets, available for distribution in November and December.
 - d. Regular program of discussion groups on economic topics.
 - e. For past 5 years have supplied agents with a set of 5 or 6 charts on economic topics. These were available as cards about 24 by 30 inches, or as slides. About 65 of the 90 agents secured copies last year.

- Example 3. Preparation of a Leader's Outlook Handbook and holding of 12 district meetings in November and December to train extension agents and other agricultural leaders. The Annual Outlook Bulletin is ready at that time and these agents and leaders are expected to hold meetings and disseminate the outlook information to the rural people. During

the year, a monthly publication, "Timely Economic Information for Farmers." is printed and this has a circulation of about 16,000. At least 60% of this material is outlook information. Additional timely material is irregularly mimeographed and sent to extension agents. Occasional articles for magazines and newspapers are prepared and speeches are given on radio stations and to local service club groups.

Example 4.

- a. Outlook was presented to all State staff members by personnel attending Outlook in Washington, D. C.
- b. Eight district meetings of all extension agents were held in December, 1947. Subject-matter specialists presented Outlook to the agents as it related to their field.

For the past several years, P.M.A. representatives attended these meetings and their program was presented and discussed by a member of State P.M.A. office.

All Outlook information was compiled into a mimeographed booklet and enough copies given to each county for all county agricultural workers.

Our two home management specialists (in the form of a team demonstration) used pictures and lettering on flannel board posters to present to all agents in 8 district meetings the Outlook on the following phases: (1) Money Management (2) Housing and Furnishings (3) Clothing (4) Nutrition (5) Gardens (6) Health Services and Medical Facilities.

- c. In county meetings representatives of all agricultural agencies and leading farmers and farm women received information. Extension agents were in charge.
- d. In community meetings, representatives of all agricultural agencies were given the responsibility of presenting Outlook information to farm people.

